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Number 28 - September 1997 - Ruddy Ada, it's gone up to 80p

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THE NUMBER ONE FANZINE OF WYCOMBE WANDERERS

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Yeah, OK, it's gone up to 80 pence
- but just look at what you're
getting for it. A charming wipe
clean cover - ideal for those of you
with messy eating habits, a
charming splash of colour too, and
a record number of pages to boot.
Yep, TAF is back - bigger, bolder
but sadly more expensive. Our
extensive market research (ahem)
saw plenty of you telling us to go
for broke, up the pages and sell it
for a quid - but we've managed to
do the above while keeping the
price rise to a minimum.
Well, at the time of writing (before
the Blackpool away trip) things
haven't exactly been a barrel of
laughs on the field, with the lads
making a bit of a dopey start to
the season. But remember,
Wanderers have never lost on the
day a new issue of TAF has hit the
streets (perhaps), so the unbeaten
run through to Christmas starts
here! Otherwise we'll have to start
digging out our Elvis tape again!
Hand on heart, we can safely say
that there's truly something for
everyone in this issue - including
our first ever quiz page for kiddies
and pensioners (sorry no saucy girl
chewing a pencil on the cover).
Also, the TAF 96/97 season survey
results appear, and for the ladies
we take a step back to a day when
footballers really were sexy, in our
all new Page 7 Fella series. Please
don't say it's sexist - because it's
not.
So in the words of Joe
Longthorne, thank you for buying
TAF - it's a beautiful day and
you're all beautiful people too.
Thank you and goodnight.

terrace tattle

.....

Where are the jaspers? Regular readers of this column will recall that every year I have a intimate encounter with the devils own insect - either at a pre-season friendly, or the opening fixture of a league season. However this year the pesky rouges have been almost non-existent. Indeed despite sticky Coke and Fanta drinks at the Wigan and Northampton games not one has appeared circling my head like one of Saturn's rings, before making a bee-line (ho ho) towards any exposed area of skin. Undoubtedly this means the wasps are clearly working up a big scam to cause ultra destruction in the next few weeks, so don't be fooled.

For the previous two seasons, this fanzine had been the proud sponsors of Sir Gazza of Patterson, but sadly this year we'll be opting out of the Mark Your Man deal - partly because you have to pay more for less (an extra £50 for a 50% cut in matches, what a bargain) but mostly because of the farcical presentation ceremony after the last home game of the season, where we felt as welcome as a turd on the shoe of the Queen.

Predictably, Gaz himself failed to turn up for the annual bash and to be fair, we couldn't really blame him for that. What really palmed us off was the attitude of Mark Austin, who assured us that the player in question would be fined (like we really care), and assured us bugger all else. I suppose there isn't much else anyone could have done, but we just know that his reaction would have been so different had it been anyone else. Indeed, last year when Steve McGavin failed to show, his sponsor exhibited a display of grief one would expect for war heroes returning in body bags - and on that occasion Austin was falling over himself to make up for the slight. In short, if the marketing manager doesn't value our contribution as much as other people's then he can do without this year.

It may seem hard to believe, but we spent four issues cobbling together the cash together, leaving barely enough cash for improvements to our computer systems etc. So this year, any money we do get will go on improving and expanding TAF.

Back to the present, and you've got to admit it's not been a tasty start to the season. A 5-2 nightmare at Wigan, defeat by Fulham side containing (and I can scarcely bring myself to say it) Matt Lawrence, and a bore draw against Northampton. Indeed it has been the exact opposite to what I and, I presume, many of you, expected. And so have the skills of Martin Taylor - at the moment it's not far off Parkin 2.

For some, admittedly admirable reason, us Wanderers fans have been talking up our prospects like nothing else. Remember frothing with latent rage at the bookies odds of 33-1? I do, but

in the cold light of the season have we seen anything that justifies lower odds? While our contemporaries have, like Mr Al Fayed (TAF - topical, satirical, and 20p dearer), been lobbing cash around, Beeksy and the boys have been adopting the Margaret Thatcher maxim of good housekeeping, leaving the squad thinner than the hair on Brian Lee's head. Now before these fine gentlemen admonish me for being an ungrateful wretch, I should like to point out that I'm not having a go about it, for with a constitution like WWFC's this is the way we'll have to live for now. Basically, we've just got to sit tight and pray for the youth team to throw up some successes, which it shows every sign of doing at the moment.

That said, I'm sure that Wanderers will click soon and provide us with some better results, but after the previous two seasons I'm happy enough watching a team trying to pass its way to victory rather than lumping its way to relegation.

Moving on, have you noticed how Alan Smith has become solely responsible for everything that has gone wrong at the club? Fair enough you may think, but the Tattle believes certain people are hiding behind the colossal dark shadow of Smith. For example, now that the quartered shirts are back it has become de rigueur for the club to talk about 'the previous unpopular kit designed by Alan Smith'. OK so Smithy was clearly the prime mover, but don't try and tell me that he did it without accomplices.

Consequently if Alan was Fred West then who played Rose? I seem to remember our marketing department trumpeting rather loudly about fairly chosen designs and superior Mizuno quality. Did Alan chain them up and beat them until they cracked, or did they take a greedy gamble that failed abysmally? I'll go with the latter, and congratulate those campaigners who gave the marketing men a timely puch on the nose.

Usually it's worth spending a few moments discussing the trialists, but as they were all crap I shan't bother, except regarding the subject of Jason Van Blerk who generated press hype on a par with Smith's pre-season arrival two years ago. Every day Teletext tantalised us with snippets of 'will he, won't he?' press releases - which served to heighten the disappointment when he cleared off to Man City via Crystal Palace. But lets face it, here was a man who had failed to get into Millwall's far from superb side last year, and certainly a man who looked far from an adequate replacement for Mickey Bell (bastard by the way, but more later!). With Steve Brown in the sort of form he's showed us already this season, I have a feeling that we won't miss Van Blerk, and certainly not at the wages he was reported to be after.

I know it's an old subject, but do you have to be backward to select the Lawrence Osbourne Bottle of Perrier award? Every week, a selection of well known national companies put their names to decisions that clearly mar the standing of the products they produce. For example, in the first leg of the Coca Cola match against Fulham, respected refuse relocation firm Biffa Waste Services chose Wanderers midfield player John Cornforth as the man of the match - a selection that would have mystified a blind man. Now if Biffa can't see that Cornforth is a mountain of garbage then how can you trust them to locate yours and dispose of it in a professional way? Ponder that, and I'll see you all soon.

AUSSIE RULES O.K.

I was sitting in a bar one warm evening supping on a Tooheys Extra Dry, ACDC's "You Shook Me All Night Long" was blaring out of the jukebox for the umpteenth time that night, several TV screens displayed the T.A.B. horse and greyhound racing from around the vast country. Australians were downing schooners of beer (just over half a pint the lightweights) in anticipation of the 80's club nite (sic) soon to be kicking off upstairs. One of these said natives overheard me talking and enquired "Are you a Pommie mate?". Oh how I love that affectionate moniker, he wanted to talk about football or "soccer" as they say down-under, it turned out he was one of a rare breed of Aussie soccer lovers. He raved on about Liverpool, Man U, Newcastle etc in an obvious bid to prove to me his knowledge of the beautiful game. Sadly he hadn't heard of Wycombe Wanderers so I filled him in on our recent history and league status (at the foot of the 2nd at the time). Then he astounded me with a chilling prediction: "In five years time the Socceroos will beat England, we're catching you up fast". I nearly fell off the bar stool laughing, he left wagging a knowing finger at me and saying "Just like the footie (rugby) and the cricket mate, we'll stuff you pommies at soccer next". Looking at it like that he did seem to have a point, I had to investigate.



Over the following months I watched several domestic matches on the TV, a handful of internationals and could only bare to attend a couple of Sydney United performances from the terraces. The standard was very poor, Wycombe could thrash their domestic teams most convincingly. I concluded that we had nothing to worry about and that the Prophet Of Doom I had met was nothing but an alcoholic schizophrenic. The number of laughable defensive errors which led to ludicrous goals was incredible, it seemed that the finest soccer, in Sydney at least, was to be found at Centenial Park on sunday mornings when British and other European back-packers got together for a kick around. Then something significant happened, Terry Venables was appointed coach of the Australian national side, suddenly interest in soccer rocketed down-under.



Soccer to date has mainly been regarded as a small minority sport played mostly by Turkish, Greek and Italian immigrants, thus explaining the colourful surnames of the national team. Suddenly it seemed that the Aussies who were bored of whipping us at cricket, rugby league and rugby union were looking for a new sport to humiliate us at. They wanted to go for the jugular this time, and with Traitor El Tel at the helm they began to take our national game a lot more seriously. Nothing means more to them than beating us at sport, they love it.

I began to worry a little, most of Australias' national team play in Europe and are benefiting from the experience. Traitor Tels' record as coach with them is very impressive and they look likely to qualify for next years World Cup, STRENGTH! Admittedly the qualifying group they're in is hardly tough, New Zealand are probably the stiffest opposition and the Aussies swept them aside with ease. I suppose if some of the European experience the players are having is at Portsmouth (nothing dodgy going on there I'm sure) then England should remain several leagues ahead for a long time.

Remember when America beat us at football, obviously it'll NEVER happen again but the humiliation was enormous. If a yank predicted to you five years previously that the U.S.A. would beat England in the next few years you'd never of believed them would you? We are undoubtedly far better than our Australian rivals at present but five years is quite a long time in sport. The Aussies have an irritating knack of taking our national games and thrashing us at them, could they do the same with football? A chilling thought, maybe the prophet I met wasn't a madman, if the unthinkable should occur at least now you've been warned.



STOP PRESS - Wanderers have just stuffed Blackpool 4-2 as we go to press with goals from Stallard, Kavanagh and, dear lord, Corny! Also, England have just routed the Aussies at The Oval. Plus TAF fave's Dorchester Town have just triumphed 2-0 over Halesowen Town! Happy days are truly here again.

PAGE 7 FELLA

No1 - Barry Silkman



APPEARANCES - 6

GOALS - 0

SEX GOD RATING - 8

TAF'S TOP PREDICTIONS

Here we are, another new season and another chance for us to make fools of ourselves with some wildly inaccurate predictions. Who will be the stars of this season, who will be clowns. Read on and all will be revealed.

AFC BOURNEMOUTH: Apart from being the first club in alphabetical order there's not too much to be said about this lot. Their hard times appear to be behind them. Expect mid table obscurity.

BLACKPOOL: With their pervy chairman rightly behind bars Blackpool don't get on the telly too much these days. Always a good away trip if only to laugh at surely the crappiest, tackiest seaside resort north of Margate. A club with a past but very little future. Outsiders for the play-offs.

BRENTFORD: Who can say? Brentford always flatter to deceive. They look the part but then blow with poor home form. With Webb moving upstairs and the selling of Asaba they could struggle but will probably lose in the play-off semi-final...again.

BRISTOL CITY: Bastards. They're going down.

BRISTOL ROVERS: Going 'home; to the Memorial Ground' didn't work out quite how they would have hoped. They should have gone back to Eastville. It's probably a Supermarket by now but it will still be a better venue for football than their present home. A relegation scrap in store for these farmers.

BURNLEY: Chris Waddle as new manager, good support, high expectations. It's bound to end in tears. Any team that lost 5-0 to the Blues last season has got some work to do. At least that tosser Adrian 'Inches' Heath has gone. Top half. Maybe late play-off spot.

CARLISLE UNITED: "We'll be in the Premier League within ten years" Michael Knighton told the world three years ago. Mind you, he also told the world he was going to buy Man. Utd. Beware of false prophets. Maybe he meant the Dr. Martens Premier League. Back to Division Three for our friends in the north.

CHESTERFIELD: Every dog has his day. The Spirettes had their's last season. Mid-table and out of the FA Cup in the second round. This club used to wear Union Jack Shirts so they don't deserve to go up.

FULHAM: A media dream. Al Fayed and all his money equals an improved ground, better facilities and a forty man squad of 1st Division has beens equals total disappointment. Money can but success but even at the top money is no guarantee. Just ask Bryan Robson.

GILLINGHAM: The scene of one of Wycombe's worst ever performances is now also the home of Brighton. Expect long ball football from a team who's pitch is shagged by mid September. The Gills could just avoid relegation.

GRIMSBY: I can't see this club bouncing straight back. The only excitement they've had at Blundell Park in recent years was when manager Brian Laws punched their ex-Italian international Bonetti up the bracket. Bottom half of the table for these rancid fisherman.

LUTON TOWN: Any club with such a crap away end and Butlin's chalets down one side of their ground deserve nothing less than relegation. However, there's no justice in football so they will probably make the play-offs.... and lose.

MILLWALL: Optimism has returned to the New Den with Billy Bonds in charge. Why? All he achieved as a manager at West Ham was an FA Cup semi-final, which they lost 4-0. Mind you, we signed up Alan Smith. Top half but will miss out on the play-offs.

NORTHAMPTON TOWN: They earned a point at Adams Park but should lose points for a) Calling themselves the Cobblers, b) trying to claim dubious penalties, c) thinking Steve Brown's gutted he doesn't play for them, d) calling their new ground 'Sixfields' when it's blatantly only one field. Enjoy your season in Division 2 It's the drop for you.

OLDHAM ATHLETIC: Difficult one to call this. They could go straight back up but may be on a downward spiral. Could be a bet for the play-offs but then again, so could most clubs.

PLYMOUTH ARGYLE: They're not allowed to play under floodlights at Home Park. Every time they turn them on the players just stare at them open mouthed and the fans run away scared. That's what happens when you the West Country mix with the developed world. Bottom half, probably going down.

PRESTON NORTH END: It could be their year, but then again it may not. Another club with a dim and distant past full of glory. With their support and newish owners they could do well.

SOUTHEND: Apart from owning the crappiest new 'Grandstand' in football I get the feeling Sarfend are back in the Second Division to stay. A boring season with nothing to play for by February.

WALSALL: Another mid-table candidate. Too good for the drop, not good enough to go up. Even in a tight league I can't see them doing much.

WATFORD: They will finish bottom of the table, Rocket Ronnie Rosenthal won't score all season, Graham Taylor will commit suicide and that talentless twat Elton John will be bricked up behind a wall and left to rot.....

WIGAN ATHLETIC: A lot is expected of Wigan this year. However, I suspect their rugby team will do better than their football team. Another possible play-off team.

WREXHAM: A good strong side who could do well. I can see them finishing in one of the top two places. Then again, they'll probably get relegated.

WYCOMBE WANDERERS: A glorious season as the Blues win the Second Division, the FA Cup, the League Cup, the Auto Windscreen Shield and get promoted straight to the Premier League which they will dominate for the next twenty years.

YORK CITY: It's about time this lot went down. Beating Man Utd in the League Cup is all well and good but it won't be much consolation come May.

So there you have it. A concise and totally inaccurate preview of the season to come. I may have hedged my bets a bit by tipping nearly every club for the play-offs but I do believe it will be that tight. Next May I'll be able to see how many I got right. Not too many I suspect.

THE SELECTOR

"Lip up, Fatty, Fatty, lip up, Fatty, Fatty, reggae....." and "One step beyond!!!!..." might be some people's only association with The Selector, but we here at TAF are set to change all that with our per issue guide to forthcoming games for the Blues. You might call it crystal ball gazing, fluke or even witchcraft, but we believe that our expert panel of footy pundits will get pretty close to getting the result, and on occasions the score right for each match. Can help with betting, choosing which away matches to go to, family planning, diet, budgeting etc. etc. Plus, if you know what the Blues are going to do of a Saturday or Tuesday, the therapeutic effects could be sensational. Could help with avoiding stress if you know the lads are going to get thrashed next match, likewise could be that perfect tonic after a stressful week grappling with the world's money markets - yeah, well that's what we all do, anyhow. So without further ado.....

FULHAM (H) 30/8/97 - This will be the third meeting of these two clubs in the space of a month, so we should have got the measure of them by now. Judging by the first game, the teams seem pretty evenly matched in most departments, so a draw seems likely.

Final Score: 1-1

SOUTHEND (H) 2/9/97 - It may surprise you to learn that Wycombe have a particularly good record against teams that they have never played before in the League, so with the atmosphere of an evening crowd, the Blues should manage the odd goal to win it.

Final Score: 1-0

WATFORD (A) 6/9/97 - After displaying disgraceful green-rubbing tactics in both of our entertaining (if low scoring) encounters last season, it seems about time we got one over the local riff-raff from stockbroker Herts., so providing the gods begin to turn up the corners of their mouths at us, a rare away victory should be forthcoming. Without the rather brilliant Kevin Miller in goal, the Hornets will look shakier at the back than Bill Haley's Greatest Hits. Miss it at your peril.

Final Score: 2-1

CARLISLE (H) 13/9/97 - Carlisle don't seem to travel too well to Wycombe, in fact we've won every match here against Cumbria's finest (!). Don't expect that to change, but likewise don't expect a thrilling affair - the lads will do just enough to move up into the top half of the division.

Final Score: 2-0

BRENTFORD (A) 19/9/97 - With little transfer activity at Griffin Park, the Bees have made an indifferent start to the campaign, however their cosy ground will provide an atmospheric setting for the Chairboys to lose by the odd goal in three, unfortunately. I'd go down the pub, personally.

Final Score: 1-2

PRESTON (H) 27/9/97 - Games with PNE always produce something special, even if it was the NL's largest collection of red cards by one team last year. Don't expect fortune to smile on us this time as the Deepdale outfit continue to surge up the League towards inevitable promotion this season. **Final Score: 0-1**

BURNLEY (A) 4/10/97 - With Geordie journeyman Chris Waddle at the helm, the Clarets will be a tough enough nut to crack without some circus-like defending from the lads to send us to a third consecutive defeat. One to miss, unless you like 'Nam-style flashbacks of last season's travels.

Final Score: 1-3

GILLINGHAM (A) 11/10/97 - Unless you count a lucky strike by Timmy Langford a few seasons back, Priestfield Stadium, with its art deco stands and diddly away terrace, has not been a happy hunting ground for the Blues in recent history. This will partly change, and we might even get a good game as four goals get shared in Kent.

Final Score: 2-2

BRISTOL ROVERS (H) 18/10/97 - It will be back to winning ways at the Park as JG's boys give relegation faves Rovers a lesson in finishing. Expect Steve McGavin to break a mini goal-drought.

Final Score: 3-0

CHESTERFIELD (A) 25/10/97 - After last season's glory, this year will come as the proverbial 'bump back to earth' for the Spireites, especially having sold youth prodigy Kevin Davies to Southampton. The Derbyshire outfit will find goals difficult to come by, although this should allow Wycombe to gain another fairly welcome away result.

Final Score: 0-0

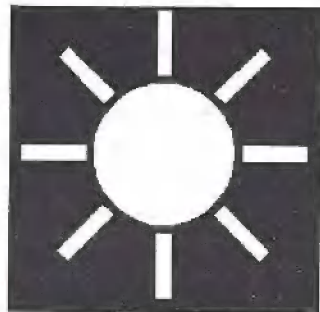
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TAF REVIEWS...

The Summer Of Sport

Well, here we are at the start of another season, and although its only been a couple of months break from footy, it seems like a lifetime. However it gives us a chance to cast our eyes towards other sporting pastimes, and here at TAF we've been out and about (or should that be slumped in front of the gogglebox) reviewing the goings-on.

Firstly we have to start at the CRICKET where another woeful series is about to come to a close. The depressing factor is that after promising so much in the opening test, the predictable rot set in and the team fell apart. Looking at the Australian line up, we all thought that this was our year to reclaim the precious urn. There was no-one who looked that threatening in their side, certainly no-one with the calibre and presence of Border, Boon, Hughes - those titans of years gone by. What's more our batting line up - Hussain, Thorpe and Crawley, looked to be in top form. But predictably the Aussies got it together - fat Warne, Gippo Gillespie and perm head Reiffel all contributing to our downfall. However it wasn't just the Aussies who did the damage. Our selectors managed to wreak havoc by picking average county seamers like Mike Smith and ignoring the supreme form of Ramprakash, who will no doubt be out for zero in the last test now he's been picked. On top of this Atherton and Stewart have been hopeless with the willow and the tail has wagged about as much as an arthritic St.Bernard, Gough and Croft being the chief culprits here.



Oh well, there's always a positive side, and this time it turned out to be Geoff Boycott on Grandstand telling presenter Ray Stubbs that he was talking "sentimental codswallop". The look on Ray's face, obviously gagging to deck Boycott, was priceless.

GOOD BITS: Shane Warne getting abused/Hussain's double-ton/Richie Benaud's deteriorating squint.

BAD BITS: Smug Aussies everywhere/Atherton still captain/Ian Healy still alive.

Onto TENNIS and Wimbledon was slightly more entertaining this year. There was plenty of 'lad' interest in the talents of Martina Hingis and Anna Kournikova, proving that you don't have to look like a geezer to be good at the sport. There was also some joy in to be had in the Brit department with Rusedski and Henman having their annual decent performances. Sadly none of our girls managed to get anywhere - with most of them looking like they could do with shedding a few stone(s). However my own enjoyment in the tournament wavered in the second week with the depressing sight of Sue Barker and Pam Shriver giggling their way through hours of commentary, where a bit more of Des Lynam would have been a far more pleasing option.



GOOD BITS: No Martina Navratilova/no Sir Cliff/watching the British women lose
BAD BITS: Close-ups of Czech mutant Peter Korda/The Sun newspapers infatuation with female players rear-ends (OK - good in some cases).

And of course there was ATHLETICS with the World Championships in Athens. Once again Britain got a sorry haul of medals with only a few decent performances by the likes of Denise Lewis, Steve Backley, and the relay boys bringing some respect to the tally. And true to form our best gold medal hopes were dashed when middle distance runner Kelly Holmes got knackered in a heat. Now there's currently a lot of debate about British athletes getting lottery money. Should they get a pittance, as they do, or should we be giving them huge lump sums so they can afford top quality training. Well, excuse me for being cynical, but the likes of busty sprinter Jenny Stoute and obese shot-putter Bob Weir will never come home with more than wet handkerchiefs, top coaches or not. Back to



the championships though, and there weren't any major drug scandals, so at least Ron Pickering will be resting in peace this summer.

GOOD BITS: David Moorcroft's suave delivery and equally suave attire.

BAD BITS: Counting how many times Jamie Baulch said "innit?" in interviews.

Other summertime thrills have been in limited supply. FORMULA ONE fans have seen Damon Hill's fortunes rise dramatically in the last few races, but watching Smug Schumacher and Vile Villeneuve barter for the top spot is nothing short of depressing. The real highlight therefore had to be Oxford fan Jim Rosenthal looking gravely ill aboard the ITV yacht in Monaco. The day before the Grand Prix, at the qualifying session, he was boasting about what a fine view he had in the blazing sunshine. However a mere day later in storm conditions, his vomit-stained polo shirt was there for the whole nation to guffaw at. Superb entertainment which alone justified your licence fee for the year.

So that was how the summer went...now let's concentrate on the REAL sport.

THE THIRD ANNUAL TAF

AWARDS

Players, fans, TAF readers everywhere - we understand it's been a trying summer - England's dismal showing once again in the Ashes, no football for at least four weeks, and most crucially of all, not knowing the results of the 3rd Annual TAF Survey for season 1996/97 - the one that *really* matters. So whose mantelpiece will be groaning this time around? With a record postbag to wade through, we had much stiffer competition in many categories - and fear not, for personnel no longer at Adams Park will be tracked down and presented with their award(s) by Bernie Clifton at a highly embarrassing ceremony sometime very soon.

1) BEST PLAYER: Mickey Bell - 73%, Steve McGavin - 15%, Paul McCarthy - 8%, Jason Cousins - 2%, Others - 2%.

Well, the winner was never going to be in doubt, however I wonder if Silky Steve's tally would have been a fair bit higher if Belly had packed his bags straight after the final whistle against Bristol City? Paul 'Dog' McCarthy deservedly got third and shock of all shocks, only one solitary vote for Dave Carroll - a commuter town in Bucks keels over in amazement an enquiry into vote-rigging will be launched, I assure you all.

2) MOST IMPROVED PLAYER: Steve McGavin - 84%, Mickey Bell - 12%, Steve Brown - 3%, Others - 1%.

With last season being one of significant change in staff at Wycombe, it was always going to be difficult to compare and contrast improvements in players' performance, bearing in mind that they had to have been playing for us at least part of the previous season to qualify. McGavin's romp to victory demonstrates his transformation from unwanted lard-arse under Smithy, to svelte midfield general under Gregory, which was as much testament to Sir John's skills as the boy McPasty himself - nice one, Steve.

3) BEST BUY: Paul McCarthy - 36%, Michael Forsyth - 18%, Michael Simpson - 15%, Paul Read - 11%, Mark Stallard - 11%, Jason Kavanagh - 7%, Others - 2%.

All change at the back meant tough competition in this category, unlike season 1995/96 where Smith only managed two signings of any note. We at TAF were well chuffed that Macca won (Alan Smith's solitary success at Wycombe?) being big fans of the defensive maestro, and some convincing displays have rewarded him with the captaincy in Cousins' enforced absence. It'll not surprise you to learn that Messrs Parkin and Cheesewright between them polled fewer votes than the Neo-Nazi candidate in Tottenham at the last election.

4) STRANGEST INCLUSION/ACQUISITION: John Cornforth - 28%, Brian Parkin - 19%, Neil Davis - 16%, Meguel Desouza - 10%, Matt Lawrence - 9%, John Cheesewright - 6%, Others - 12%.

This category is designed not only to be mildly critical of players who haven't, erm, justified their weekly beer vouchers, but also to question the logic of management in picking some right duffers with (in our humble opinion as unqualified fans) far better on the bench, oblique, in reserves. For instance, forking out £50k for Corny was bad enough for somebody quite clearly not remotely fit, but to insist on playing him every week to justify his fee?? Hmmm - fortunately he appears to be back under 17st. this season, and his play is noticeably improving - however, like Carol Vorderman, we're still not convinced. The two goalies grabbed a quarter of votes between them, with the world's least prolific striker since Carl Leaburn, managing to sneak third. Keep shooting, Neil.

5) STRANGEST OMISSION/SALE: Paul McCarthy - 21%, John Williams - 18%, Terry Evans - 14%, Gary Patterson - 12%, Meguel Desouza - 10%, Others - 25%.

Unlike the last category, this slot is entirely policy based - Paul M. gains his second award, but only by virtue of his shocking exclusion from the starting XI during two spells in the second half of last season. The ever popular Johnnie W. upset 18% of the electorate with his unceremonious shunt towards non-league obscurity (and that postie's job again?) via Hereford, and the exits of Big Tel and Gazza Patt also disturbed significant numbers of you. Smeguel surprisingly sneaked into the frame, although one sarky punter added, "A strange sale in that we managed to get £50k for him." Very good - another wag cited, "Anybody who bought last season's kit," as the strangest sale. You two fancy a regular slot?



**STRANGE OMMISIONS -
MACCA AND TEL**

6) BEST GAME: Burnley (h) - 62%, Notts Co (a) - 12%, Col.Utd - 9%, Bristol Rovers (a) - 7%, Peterborough (a) - 6%, Others - 4%.

Only ever one winner here in a season littered with some truly dire performances, especially away from Adams Park, this was a victory not witnessed on this scale since we thrashed Runcorn 5-2 to gain Football League promotion. I guess the Notts Co victory was the big relief game, the one that told us we were all but there, plus a rare three points away from Bucks. The emotion of pure hate always stirs up passions, hence our highly satisfying stuffing of the Essex twats easing into third spot. Posh (a) is simply explained by the 'demise of Smith factor'. Harsh but so true.

7) WORST GAME: Peterborough (a) - 33%, Gillingham (a) - 18%, Any under Smith - 15%, Rotherham (a) - 13%, Bristol City (a) - 9%, Others - 12%.

We're not ones for stale old clichés at TAF generally, but the phrases "spoilt for choice" and "pick of a bad bunch" tend to rush to the front of the brain here like a rather large and pure dose of something particularly illegal. Posh (a) - OK, probably the most depressing to watch, but looking on the bright side we did score three goals and for the long-term future of the club (q.v. Q.6) was retrospectively highly satisfying in many ways. Full credit must go to Ivor and the board for having the courage of their convictions that early in the season. 15% of voters were anti-Smith generalists, but the other three games in our top five were truly all about as enthralling as watching consecutive episodes of "Oh, Doctor Beeching". Rotherham (a) was my personal nadir for the season, with a second half display as poor as I can ever remember seeing from a Wycombe side. Ahhh - crappy days

8) BEST GROUND: Notts Co - 26%, Millwall - 20%, Bristol City - 16%, Notts Forest - 13%, Adams Park - 12%, Watford - 7%, Others - 6%.

So, Notts Co's impressive Meadow Lane scoops the gold here, might I be so bold as to suggest that the result had something to do with this? I'm sure the fine facilities at Vicarage Road would have wooed more than 7% of you had we not lost to that last minute goal. Surprised to see the City Ground, Nottingham in there with 13% - since the terracing disappeared, it has become characterless and dull, so Forest fans tell me. Only having 6,000 in there doesn't help either. Overall, the quality of stadia has noticeably improved, even in the few years that we have been incumbent on the FL.

9) WORST GROUND: Colchester - 37%, Luton - 30%, Gillingham - 12%, Bristol Rovers - 8%, Shrewsbury - 7%, Others - 6%.

Oh, yes - we're always in favour of the S**m winning any 'worst' category, whether they even partly deserve it or not. As it turns out, Layer Road (through the middle of it - I wish they would) was probably the worst dive we visited last term - who can forget that joke Meccano stand at the other end that looks as if it would fall over if you broke wind in its general direction? Swampy hangs out under sturdier looking bivouacs than that. Kenilworth Road came a surprisingly close second - atmospheric and quirky it may be, but we cannot forgive (a). the Butlins chalets down one side, and (b). sufficient leg-room only for the under-4s. I was a little shocked and saddened by the inclusions of Gillingham and Shrewsbury up there - I'd sooner visit somewhere with a bit of character than Walsall or Northampton.

10) BEST GOAL: Bell v Millwall (h) - 27%, Stallard v Burnley (h) - 27%, Brown v Notts Co (a) - 17%, Carroll v Bristol City (h) - 13%, Desouza v Chesterfield - 10%, Others - 6%.

How exciting - a dead heat! To settle it, we held a penalty shoot-out, and as Mr Bell had pissed off to Bristol, Mark didn't have too much trouble winning. Totally different goals the pair, but both pretty special in their own way, it has to be said. Steve's cunning and crucial lob was also popular, whilst bizarrely, Davey C.'s fine end-of-season curler easily outscored McGavin's carbon copy effort from the other flank a few minutes later - you tell us why, guys, we just count the votes!

11) WORST MISS/NON-SAVE: John Cheesewright (all votes) - 40%, Meguel Desouza (all votes) - 36%, Brian Parkin (all votes) - 13%, Neil Davis (all votes) - 9%, Others - 2%.

This category is like the "What Happened Next?" round on Question Of Sport, everybody's favourite, and much more exiting and keenly fought than 'Best Goal'. Cheesy actually had so many ungolden moments, that we grouped them together for his winning tally - likewise the other three turkeys. Particular favourites were his fluffed cross at Millwall and his clueless o.g. slap at Bristol Rovers. Megs was a close second - his "F*** you lot - I'm gonna score a great goal (one day)!" away at the New Den was just eclipsed by his pathetically inept 'chest-over' from three yards at Cheaterborough - yes, we can fortunately laugh at it now. "A Goalkeeper Called Bwian"'s treatment of crosses in general amused a good number of you - well, we do go to football for entertainment, do we not?

12) BEST PROGRAMME/FANZINE: The Adams Family (thank you darlings, we love you all!) - 42%, Stockport (programme) - 22%, Luton (programme) - 12%, Wycombe (programme) - 10%, Others - 14%.

Are the results of this question likely to be biased in our favour? Yes. Do we

give a damn? No. Are we nonetheless delighted at retaining our crown from last time? No - why didn't we get over half the votes, you tight gits? Will Ade Wood be a trifle gutted to see the home product slip two places from last year? Probably - tough at the top, eh? Stockport and Luton deserve special mention for managing to produce something that takes longer than 10 minutes to read.

13) WORST PROGRAMME/FANZINE: Mostly crap/don't buy - 27%,
Brentford - 19%, Col.Utd - 14%, Gillingham - 12%, Walsall - 11%,
Others - 17%.

The winning vote is here is fine by us if a little noncommittal - let's face it, most programmes are glossy ad brochures and not great value for money, bearing in mind that a quality Sunday newspaper costs £1 and lasts for days on end. Brentford's rip-off reissue was a total disgrace - why should fans have to pay for the bad weather? Again, Col.U's effort wasn't all that bad, but we *really* do hate them, don't we, which is fair enough. Walsall's perennially crap production still seems to be about three seasons out of date for factual accuracy. A wide spread of votes here suggests that a good proportion of TAF readers have travelled well over the preceding season - you poor deluded fools

14) REFEREEING STANDARD: No Change - 72%, Worse - 24%, Better - 4%.

One punter summed it up perfectly: "How can you get worse than totally inconsistent, and incapable of interpreting the laws?" How indeed, although almost a quarter of you thought they managed it. This season should be better if only for the defection of the bamboozling arm-waving Uriah Rennie to the Premiership - let's see how they like him! I don't think Frazer Stretton has retired yet, though (gulp!)

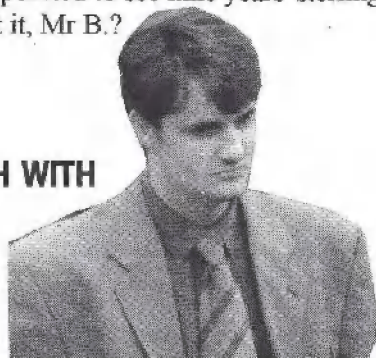
15) MARKS OUT OF TEN FOR GREGORY'S FIRST SEASON: Average Score - 8.32

There can be little doubt that Mr Gregory is the top man for the Wycombe job, and the perfect antidote for Baldeagleitis. If we hadn't played like a bunch of total arse away from home for 80% of matches last season, I feel that John's final tally would have edged past the '9' mark. The one voter who gave him '10' must have been an Adams Park regular only.

16) ADVICE FOR IVOR?: More Cash For Players - 27%, Cheaper/Easier To Buy Tickets - 13%, New Keeper - 10%, Matt Crossley Testimonial - 9%, Sell Up - 7%, Others - 34%.

Most suggestions for our Lord and Master, Mr Beeks, were not too surprisingly finance related. Producing the readies to buy some quality players was the most popular choice - particularly where Scott and Taylor were concerned. Hey presto - your wish is his command. Understandable gripes about the hefty rises in ticket prices were also mentioned by many of you, a problem that could well be solved by 'selling up' (7%). Yeah, fine, but it's not really in the Chairman's hands, is it? As a big fan of Sir Matt, we were all pretty disappointed to see nine years' sterling service disappear without a whimper - how about it, Mr B.?

SIR MATT - A PREMIER BENIFT MATCH WITH OPTIONAL FIREWORK DISPLAY?



17) HOW CAN WE IMPROVE TAF?

An impossible task, surely? Er, not exactly, although most comments were along the lines of "Keep up the good work," and "Still a great read," - what a bunch of creeps! Seriously, popular suggestions were to "Improve the appearance," (done), "Have more player and ex-player interviews," (done), and "Sort out spelling/grammar." Hmmm, the last one is tricky to execute, with a fair number of contributors, printers and little overall editorial control. As anybody who has done this sort of thing before will realise, it all tends to get chucked together at the last minute, hence mistakes invariably crop up. There - shoulders well and truly sloped.

Suggestions that we chose to ignore (editorial licence!) were: "Make it cheaper," (sorry - progress comes at a price), "More issues," (bad luck - we do actually have a life outside of TAF and aim to keep it that way), "Be more blunt and scathing," (if we were any blunter, we wouldn't be able to write - arf, arf!), and finally, "Do away reports," (What's wrong with the Wycombe Star, BFP, matchday programme, The Wanderer, Thames Valley FM etc. etc.). Happy? Some of you, hopefully.

+£+£+£+£+£+£+

Thanks to all of you who entered. Your opinions really do er help to fill up the first issue of each season. So who won Gary Patterson's shirt? Plus the book? Plus a year's free TAFs? **HUGH GROSS** of Hazlemere, that's who. Lift your head and be proud, for you my friend have won a day in the life of a top independent football fan magazine. Until this time next season, mes amis.

Parkin's: Probably the best bitter in the world

Sporting endorsements are everywhere these days. Whether it's Gianfranco Zola's "Mama's Own Recipe, Tesco Pizzas", Ryan Giggs and his Quorn Burgers, or Steve Redgrave and his atrocious Furniture Direct adverts in The Wycombe Star - there's nothing finer than earning a few quid on the side advertising dubious products.

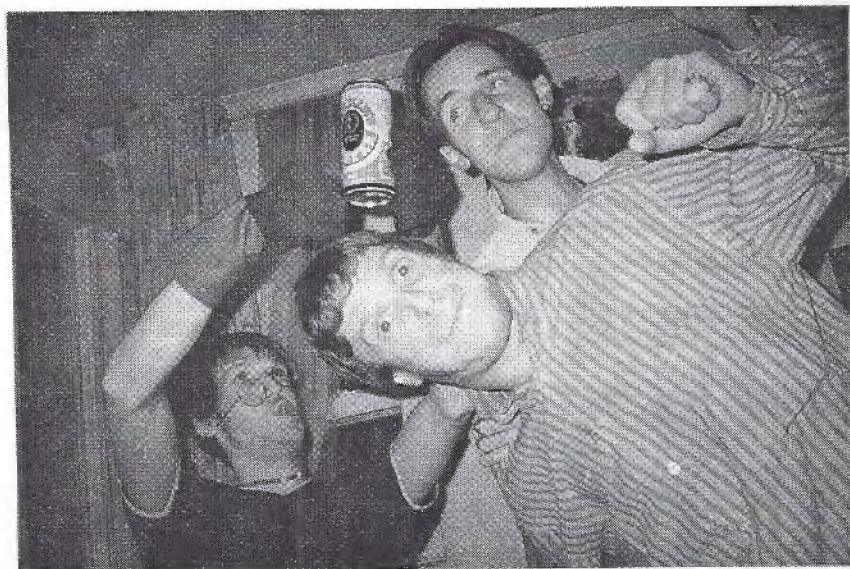
Of course opportunities have always been thin on the ground for lesser stars of sport - until a few weeks ago when Sainsbury's realised the untapped and cheap potential that lies within the lower reaches of the Nationwide League.

With stunning marketing speed, they latched on to the dropping of Wanderers Custodian Brian Parkin and have produced a beer that displays all the classic Brian hallmarks - it's weak, awful, and nobody who buys it can understand why they did so. Hell, Wycombe Sainsbury's have got it so spot on it's even positioned awfully on the shelves!

Who can be sure if the supermarket will ever decide to go big time, with TV adverts and the like, but just in case they do, TAF has come up with a few ideas that might help a hard pushed ad exec sometime in the near future.

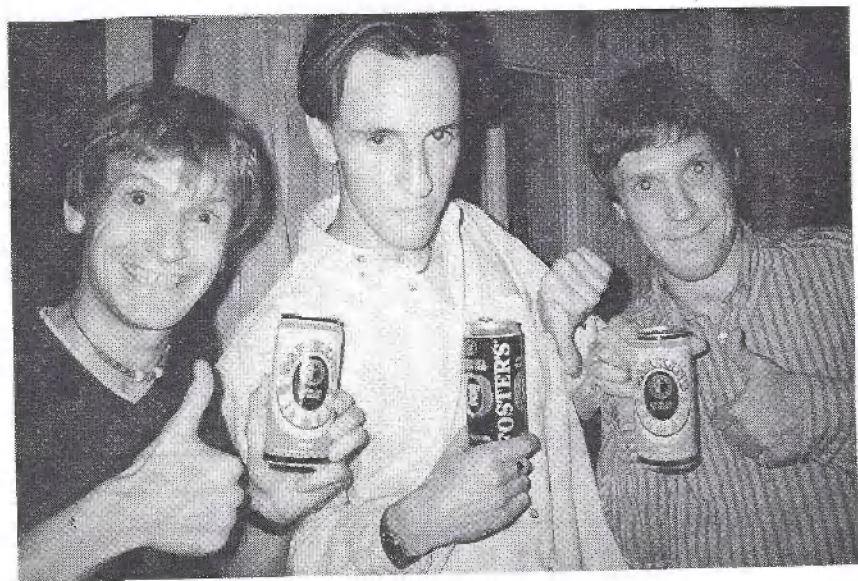


Parkin's Bitter - With 3% alcohol it's hard to handle...



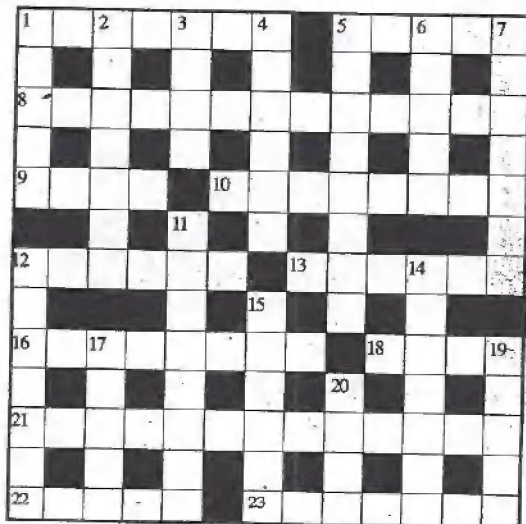
Who needs a punch when you've got Parkin's?

Parkin's Bitter - you'll be mad for it too!



FUN PUZZLE PAGE

You lucky, lucky lot. Us generous chaps at TAF are giving you the opportunity to win the video of last season 'The Great Escape'. All you have to do is complete this simple crossword and the first correct entry wins the video. Send your answers to the usual TAF address.



ACROSS:

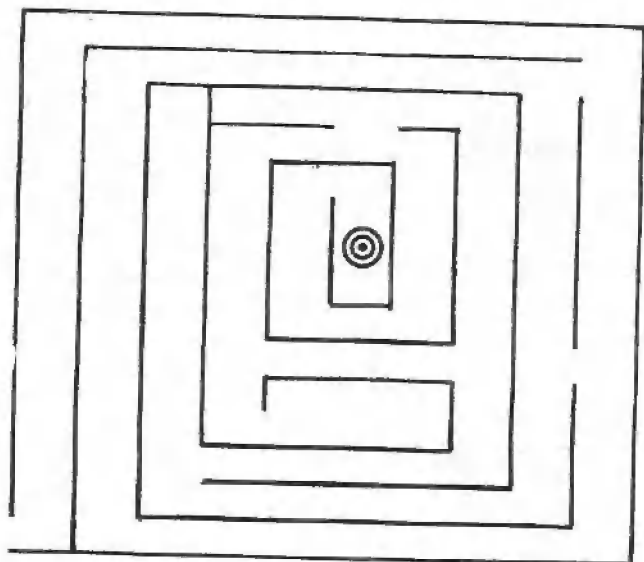
- 1) Ten grand Cheltenham signing (7).
- 5) Flying fish (5).
- 8) Slough supporters' song minus x (13).
- 9) Cat walks backwards, perhaps (4).
- 10) Boy in the desert (8).
- 12) A Fisherman's Friend indeed! (6).
- 13) What Elaine Butler should do (4 + 2).
- 16) The 'High Society' (8).
- 18) and 17 down, MADAS KRAP, Anag. (4 + 5).
- 22) Possibly a carrot (5).
- 23) March them up the hill (7).

DOWN:

- 1) Playground bum sweat (5).
- 2) Sounds like 'Reading' (7).
- 3) Simon and Cyrille (4).
- 4) Blackpool's bright kit (6).
- 5) Cornforth and Titterton marching (8).
- 6) Farrell and Portillo (5).
- 7) "No, we're sinking" they shout (7).
- 11) Useless floppy fringed fop, now at Fulham (8).
- 12) Foxy Irishman (7).
- 14) Polish Wood in cafe (7).
- 15) Couldn't catch a bus back to Bristol (6).
- 17) See 18 Across.
- 19) Harriers with mad P.A. announcer, ABBR (5).
- 20) Tank engine in the boardroom. (4).

HALF - TIME FUN PUZZLE:

Oh dear! It looks like poor Brian Parkin's hands have got lost on their way to gather a cross. See if you can help our hapless hero find the ball.



A black and white photograph of a soccer player in motion, wearing a Mexico national team jersey with vertical stripes and the word 'MEXICO' on the front. The player is running towards the left, with his right arm extended forward and his left arm bent. The background is plain white.

YOU LEFT US...

On the following
pages TAF writers
give their opinion
on Mickey Bell

JUST WHEN WE NEEDED YOU MOST

"I've got the brains you've got the looks, lets make lots of money," sang Neil Tennant of the Pet Shop Boys in the Eighties. No doubt the same was being sung by Micky Bell's agent as he rubbed his hands at the recent transfer debacle. Bell and his bum-chum will have both made a decent screw out of the dealings, but perversely the club who nurtured his skills are left with sweet Frankie Adams.

So which Wycombe fans are wishing the man all the best? Not me. I'm sour as hell about the affair. Bell has taken a sideways step to a marginally better rival club wanting only to better his pay packet. Which tells me that he doesn't care about you or I, the fans, nor his previous employers WWFC. He didn't even say thanks/goodbye in the local papers, preferring to cower under the wing of his agent. His continual "no comments" in the BFP can easily be translated as "who gives a ****", something Mr. Bell clearly didn't.

For a player who was showered with accolades at the end of the season it is little wonder that Wanderers fans are gutted, as we are left with a gaping hole on the left flank. To his credit Steve Brown is performing with the verve and guts that are unique skills to him, but I think we miss his aggressive streak in midfield, bookings or not.

So what can we expect when we see Bell next. Well, no doubt he'll whip round our defence and lash one of his 25 yarders into the back of the net. However I imagine on the whole that the crowd reaction will be less than favourable, something that could reach fever pitch if he reacts to the abuse. I have rarely abused ex-Wanderers when seeing them playing for other sides. (Nicky Evans being one exception) however I'm saving some of my finest "industrial language" for the appearance of Bell, and something tells me that I may not be alone.

J.D

It was with no great surprise the magnificent Micky Bell was going to get interest in the close season. The young lad had a God given talent which earned him player of the season, probably streaks above the rest of his contenders. However he had learnt his profession at Wycombe Wanderers under the great Martin O'Neill and John Gregory, oh and some other fellow. He wouldn't leave a club that we are forever told has great potential and is quite obviously the greatest club in the world. Except of course unless a team of some standing made an offer for him. Who could blame him for bettering himself. We would all do it. A promotion in any shape or form is something we all strive for and to play in Europe or for some first division team is a dream no one would wish to dash. Except, it appears Micky himself. The lousy no good punk. He only made a sideways step for more money. Some commitment there. I don't for one minute think this was all Micky's doing there was of course the obligatory agent involved who it appears did all the wheeling and dealing whilst Micky kept quite. It's a shame that a player who had such a great career whilst at Wycombe will be remembered not for his pace, crossing ability or deadly left foot but for the unforgiving way in which he shunned the club that provided him with what he needed to perfect his art. Steve Guppy, a better player left the blue's to join Newcastle, a move which in the end turned out to be a good one, even though the Toons didn't benefit from his genuine class. Know one could and will ever knock him for that. Keith Scott enjoyed a mix and match spell in the higher divisions, although he has seen the errors of his ways and the prodigal son returned. Even Tye Gooden made the move which sees him mention on the radio as a class first division player. Micky Bell will never be heard of again.

Neil Peters

With the exception of Morris Dancing, there can be no greater crime than a footballer who sickeningly greases up to supporters with one hand, receiving every possible award bestowed upon him, but with the other is touting his rather fine skills to other clubs, solely in the name of money. Wycombe fans have had to endure such grubby antics before, courtesy of Nicky Evans, who bled the club of wages whilst injured only to run off to Barnet on the promise of a testimonial. But who would have believed at the end of last season that Mickey Bell would do much the same thing?

Of course, the most sickening aspect of the whole affair, aside from the sneaky negotiations of Bell and his agent, was the ludicrous fee settled by the FA tribunal. So out of touch with reality was the final figure that one could only believe that the panel was made up entirely of people who know nothing about football. Surely any committee can recognise that a player who won countless player of the month awards, plus every end of season decoration going, was worth slightly more than the price we paid for John Williams?

Now all that remains is to work out exactly how to react to one of our finest players of recent times when we next come across him. Of course certain people will claim that we shouldn't barrack such a former hero of the club, but to do otherwise would be to betray any normal feeling of a passionate football supporter.

I don't care if endless jeering and abuse makes the man play better, because I need to get the whole sorry episode out of my system - and at this moment it means screaming at Bell in an act of total sour grapes, until I approach critical mass. As a supporter you are made to feel guilty when questioning the ability of some players, but when they fancy kicking you in the face you're meant to take it. I'm sorry Mickey, but you can't have it both ways - you shameless, money grabbing, gem of a player.

AD

Mickey's transfer to Bristol City upset me for two reasons. Not so much the fact that we had lost a quality player for next to nothing (nobody is indispensable), but the manner in which his transfer was conducted, and the fact that he didn't go to a bigger club. It is quite clear that Mickey had very little say in his move and that the commercial voice of his agent was the one being heard. Perhaps Mickey is shy, perhaps he doesn't have a tongue in his head, or perhaps his agent has more rabbit than Sainsbury's and doesn't *allow* his players to speak for themselves. I just feel that Mickey could have done so much better than (on last season's form) a slightly above-average 2nd Division side, and in so doing attracted a larger fee for Wycombe.

I'm not saying all agents are the same, but Mickey's doesn't break the stereotype of a smooth-talking contract expert, out to gain as large a fee as possible for Number One and sod everyone else, but at least able to convince the player that the deal he has struck is the best one possible. Could somebody not start running day release courses to teach players how to manage their own affairs? The entry qualification could be kept quite low - perhaps, two active brain cells, so you'd lose a few, but could be a real eye-opener for the rest of them. As for transfer tribunals themselves, I can only assume they are a two-man board made up of Mystic Meg and Russell Grant - where else could they get their numbers from?

(DC)

It's always hard when you lose one of your best players. You always know players come and go but losing Matt Lawrence and Brian McGorry was not too difficult to swallow.

We've lost probably the two best left sided players we have had, Steve Guppy and Mickey Bell, for a fraction of what they were worth. Both players left in sad circumstances. Guppy's transfer was over before the club knew about it. Mickey Bell's transfer dragged on far longer but the outcome was just as disappointing. Bell made it clear he wanted to leave at the end of last season. If he had gone on to greater things such as a First Division or Premier League club I could have accepted it.

Bristol City however is little more than a sideways move. City are a bigger club than Wycombe and probably have better prospects. However, a move to another Second Division side doesn't seem to me to be particularly ambitious.

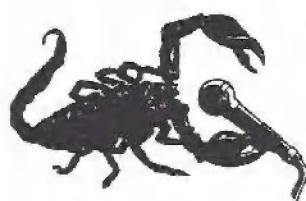
I can't really complain about the tribunal system. It worked in our favour signing Simpson from Notts. County. It's just a shame we couldn't settle the transfer fee ourselves.

If Bell's agent is to be believed Mickey could have moved abroad for a free transfer which is a result of the Bosman ruling. Surley if a club invests money in a player they are entitled to ask for a fee if that player moves on. When Mickey Bell signed for Wycombe, ironically as a replacement for Guppy, he was a competent winger. It was at Wycombe under first Alan Smith (he did do the odd thing right) and then under John Gregory that he flourished into an excellent wing-back.

If a player so obviously one footed as Jordi Cruyff is worth millions surely Mickey Bell, who had the rare ability to cross with both feet, must be worth £500,000. I'll miss Mickey Bell but the club can survive without him. Just promise me one thing, please don't call him a Wycombe reject when we play Bristol City. He'll probably hit a thirty yarder into the top corner.

DP

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THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

What a great idea for an Adams Family article, my most memorable game. Just one problem. I find it impossible to remember much of the last game I went to let alone my most memorable one. Of course there are those trips to Wembley, Man City away and the old Slough Derbys but I just can't remember enough about each one. So, I have come to an easy option. Most memorable bits from a whole host of games. Don't expect date names or even teams to be correct just cast your mind back and try and remember.

One of those moments to relish took place in the late 70's. I'm not nor will ever be a man of football violence but how I remember a certain F.A Cup game where the Wycombe skins enjoyed kicking out away guest (who ever they were) out of Loaks Park. I was sat with my dad as it all started. Pitch invasion, kids running scared to find their mum's while meat heads played footie with each others faces. An appalling sight but a lasting memory. As was Loaks Parks last game. The O'Neill XI A sunny day full of fun, festivity and George Best's gut. Of course it was a pantomime of a game but the after match celebrations were fine. A 60 strong football match between all fans, young boy's digging up their piece of turf whilst more risky chaps stole cushions and 12ft advertising boards. A top laugh which will not be forgotten. By the way I got the best trophy of all and pinched the AA sign from the lamppost outside the hospital directing fans to the ground, a prize indeed. In I believe Adams Park second season we played host to Kettering who were a good few points clear at the top of the table. Wycombe hovering in the middle whipped them 5-0. Oh how the mighty fall. Players of the highest standard were taking part in these magnificent games. West, Crossley, Smith, Blackler, Granville and many more. A dream team of the Conference day's. Many of those players were present at one of the most sensational occasions. The away leg in Altringham for the FA Trophy. An outstanding day where hero's Scott and West gifted Wycombe a Wembley appearance and Ken McKenna was sent off then tried to have a pot at O'Neill. The celebrations back at Adams Park that night will live forever. Martin O'Neill drunken speeches, Creasers Tommy Cooper impressions and Scotty's strutting were a sight to behold. The Final was a good day out and that all continued for a number of years.

Does anyone remember Guppy getting sent off in an away game on Boxing Day. I think it was at Farnborough. Right in front of the ref and the two benches young Steve thought it a wise move to stamp on his opponents hand. Doh!

An incident not seen by the ref at Adams Park was a fine right hook given out by living legend Hakan Hayrettin again to blues favourite McKenna. Ken was in the Alty shirt once more and had spent his life being a looser Hakky just wanted to prove the point, and he did.

Unfortunately for Alty who remembers Dennis Green sticking four past them away? Fantastic.

Carlisle was always going to be a big game. The Blues first game in the football league and a crowd made entirely out of mongers. Wycombe's second trip there was even more dramatic with most the travelling supporters being chased out of the ground. Of course there are some more recent moments but the have been few and far between and my long term memory far out shines the short term. Lets just hope in a years time we can write a page on the blue's recent shenanigans.

REG TIMBERLAKE'S...

Memoirs

"NEVER A TRUER WORD SPOKEN"

Yes hello and welcome to this new column of mine. Who'd of thought it a grandfather of three writing for those bright young upstarts The Adams Family! Well it came about after I bumped into one of them on his stall. I told him that I've always bought the magazine, but lately there's been too much effing and blinding for my liking. He told me "clean it up then, grandad" and here I am. I'm well known at the club as my brother played for Wycombe in the late Twenties. For those of you with the Official history of WWFC written by that knowledgeable Finchie and Peart (not the mad one), look up the season 1928-29. My brother is on the bottom right of the picture with the preposterous candyfloss hairdo. It was all the rage in those days and my grandson says he was ahead of his time as that hairstyle is popular again. Still back to the roaring twenties. That was my era. The football was better then, not all kick and rush like these days. The only recent Wycombe player that would have got into the side then would have been Terry Evans, cos he was a proper footballer. He didn't mess around but got stuck in where it hurts. Davey Carroll might have got on the bench, as he's a smashing lad with a young family, but the rest of them would have struggled due to a lack of skill and the all important discipline. I don't know what's wrong with today's players; they've no manners on the pitch, they spit, scowl, have punch-ups, swear like troopers and still escape with a yellow card. Now I know full well that if I was manager of Wycombe I'd have cuffed that Steve Brown around the earhole for all the cheek he gives to the referees, cos they're honest men doing their jobs like you or I. That is unless you're one of those lazy dole scroungers. I'll tell you now - if that Swampy was my grandson I'd do the decent thing and shoot him. If the good lord had wanted him to dig tunnels, he'd have been born a mole. He's a disgrace to the shire of Bucks and think of all the germs he's got, I bet he hasn't been near a sink for months. The youth of today, they make my blood boil, they want it all on a plate. Bloody new Labour they're robbing the pensioners so they can buy satellite dishes for the unemployed. Its a conspiracy... **(Oi, are you going to talk about football - ed).**

Sorry, I had to cool down there, I had a funny turn. Anyway back to the 1920's. I'll tell you I saw some of the finest football of the century. Of course you never saw it on these fancy TV screens, but you read about it and listened to the wireless, and got off your damn backside and supported your local team. That's the problem with today's youth, the club puts it on a bloody

plate for them. A season ticket for a mere pittance, quid a kid days, even students getting in cheaper than the OAPS who've supported the club through thick and thin. Whatsmore that Swan walks around the pitch giving the kiddies free food. A packet of those flashy Honey Nut Loops would have kept me in breakfast for a week, but no, I heard some snivelling little mite complaining to his dad that he wanted Chocolate Weeto's. Listen you greedy little beggar....when I was a nipper I had one chunk of chocolate a week if I was lucky. The only treat I had was when I went apple scrumping - and then I'd end up with a thrashed hide! I didn't drink fizzy pop either, I got water - out of the local stream! That was good enough for me I'll tell you.

Anyway back to football in the 20's. Of course it wasn't commercial then, because the only commerce I knew was bloody hard graft from yours truly selling farm produce. But you only have to be good looking these days and they'll sign you up, talent counts for nothing anymore. Just look at the demise of Liverpool Football Club, its gone to the dogs recently. The trouble is that clubs will sponsor anything these days for a bit of money. First it was advert boards, then shirts. What's next - tattoos on players arses I should imagine! Its sick.

Another thing in the 20's was that only real men could play football for a team like Wycombe. Youngsters had to wait their turn, as you did in life back then. So I couldn't believe it when I saw these little kiddies training with the team the other day. These youngsters, what do they call them, mascots, no YTS boys, looked like they'd never done a hard days graft in their lives. At their age I was pulling spuds out of a farmers field for tuppence a day and any money I made went in the family kitty as my ma saved for our one day-trip a year. These lads prance around, clean the odd boot and generally laze around in the sun, it's all put on a plate for them. And you should see some of the haircuts. Long woman's hair down to their collars, good lord, they'll have my granddaughter playing football next! Now, I know that if I was a footballer today, I'd refuse any contracts, wages or agents messing me around. I'd say, look I'm playing for fun and as long as you pay my travel expenses and put a half of bitter on the bar after 90 minutes, I'll play. I wouldn't turn up for training because I don't believe its necessary - you've either got the talent in your blood or you haven't. As soon as Mark West went professional he was bloody rubbish, it ruined his natural game as it does a lot of them.

Anyway, I'm sorry I didn't dip into my memoirs this time round as I had a few things I needed to off-load. However rest assured I've plenty to tell you over the coming months. Next month I'll be starting my campaign to knock down that 'orrible monstrosity The Woodlands stand and replace it with a cowshed. I'll also be teaching the Wycombe players and management how best to put a winning side together, just like the one in the 1930/31 season. In the meantime send any letters to me via TAF's mailbox. And go on foot, its far safer than car.

Until Next time

Reg Timberlake esq..... "Giving it you on a plate"

Honest... It's a bargain!

TAF investigates the possibility of a Wycombe Wanderers Clubcard

In these heady days when brand loyalty is everything, and a dopey public is all too easily thrilled at the prospect of owning yet another piece of meaningless plastic - the clubcard is an essential marketing tool.

First of all it was office supplies store Staples who only offered their lower price to people who carried their cards, which of course was just a ruse to get peoples addresses and bombard them with 'Back To School' leaflets, even when they didn't have kids.

Then Tesco took it a stage further, causing grown adults to swear undying allegiance to the supermarket giant, all for the sop of what amounts to a measly 1% saving. In turn, this saving is spent on additional (supermarket) petrol expenses, attributable to driving extra miles to their out of town sites.

With further organisations launching cards every day, how long can it be before WWFC launches their own? Of course, football clubs have never really had to offer incentives to supporters, owing to the fact that most of us wouldn't consider becoming 'consumers' at Oxford United or Watford. But as football increasingly salivates over the type of supporter who will up sticks (or executive box contracts) and switch loyalties to QPR because their sandwiches have a better range of fillings, the clubcard is bound to become essential.

Just in case anyone at WWFC is considering this, here's our TAF guide to how the WWFC Clubcard™ could work - bearing in mind at all times that 1 point = 1 penny.

Join the Official Supporters Club + 6000 points

Show that you are a true supporter of WWFC by joining the supporters club, and gain the equivalent of a £60 bonus, as well as the knowledge that unlike those who prefer not to go on club rambles and male dominated Valentines Discos, you are a true friend of the club.

Please Note - points can only be redeemed against the annual Quiz Night entry price.

Sponsor a Players Haircut + 1000 points each time he is Man of the Match

For the bargain price of £50 you can sponsor the haircut of a first team player, and every time he wins the Laurent Perrier Man of the Match award you get the equivalent of a ten pound prize. Haircut sponsors will recieve full recognition in club publications, and over the matchday tannoy. For an extra sum, you can also have artistic control over your player's haircut - so if you've ever fancied Jason Cousins with a bubble perm, or Steve Brown with ginger highlights and a rats tail, an extra fifty quid can see your dream come true. Sponsoring a haircut is the ideal way to support the club, and win a top prize. Or if you like, a poor man's Leagueline.

Please note - the football club accepts no responsibility for balding players, responsibility lies with the sponsor.

Donations to the Football Club +1 point per pound

As we all know, the constitution of WWFC means there are limited resources

for new players, so the club would like to ask / beg / make feel guilty anyone who it perceives has made a bit of cash. Some may say that this almost socialist display of wealth redistribution is somewhat at odds with the naked capitalism displayed by the club when it suits them - but hey, that's football. Any donation in excess of £1000 earns 1 point per pound, which in this instance would mean an equivalent cash saving of £10.

Please Note - Points can only be redeemed against Sportsman's Dinner tickets. Women not really welcome.

Sponsor a Programme Seller (Endorsed by Tony Blair) + 1000 points

Have your company name tattooed on the head of a programmes seller for just £100 (tattoo costs paid by the Department of Social Security in some cases) and earn a further 1000 points on your clubcard. This deal also allows you to present the sponsored lad or lass with a 300 word editorial extolling the virtues of your business. The seller will shout this out every five minutes from 1 O Clock until kick off. This is a great way to promote your enterprise and help the club, whilst giving a school-leaver valuable work experience towards attaining a place on the coveted Welfare to Work scheme.

Please Note - Points can only be redeemed against programmes bought from your sponsored seller

Points for Pints in the Vere Suite + 1 point per pint

Earn points whilst drinking yourself silly (not before the game mind, or Mr Plod will have something to say), in the Vere Suite. Present your card to the bar staff when ordering your drink, and you will accrue the cash equivalent of 1 pence! This is the ideal way to enjoy yourself and earn valuable extra cash (honest).

Please Note - Points can only be used to buy bags of crisps that are within 3 days of their sell-by date

Sponsor the Swan + 5000 points per limb

Earn credit with the 'consumers' of the future, by sponsoring the upkeep of their favourite friend, Bluey the Swan - whilst earning yourself a colossal 5000 point bonus. Participating in strenuous and un-swan like antics, such as lobbing Honey Nut Loops and Tooty Fruties into the crowd, has caused Bluey to become slightly soiled. Therefore we are offering companies the chance to turn him / her into the football mascot equivalent of a Formula One driver, with adverts on every available space. At £500 per limb, it's far cheaper than getting a patch on Damon Hill's right arm, or even Ruebens Barrichello's arse!

Please Note - Points can only be redeemed against Bluey Merchandise or 'Local Hero' The Mark West video.

Sponsor a Floodlight + 2000 points

By sponsoring a floodlight, not only will you be ensuring that football can be played in the evening and winter months - thus relieving player and supporter dehydration, but you will be embarking on a new form of subliminal advertising. At half-time in any fixture, a computer (or Mike Phillips with his Tombola machine) will randomly choose a floodlight pole. Then the other three will switch off, leaving your floodlight pole to swivel 180 degrees revealing a huge bulb that will reflect and spin your company logo across the Adams Park turf. Ideal for attracting the attention of the rave generation, sealed bids are requested by the club for this unique service.

Please Note - Points can be redeemed towards anything - that was a surprise wasn't it?

"QUITE FRANKLY, IT'S A RIP-OFF!"

While most of us were relaxing throughout the close season, drinking copious amounts of intoxicating fluids and dreaming of a Wembley visit (ever the optimist), the powers that be at the Football Club were concocting a devious and cunning plan. The aim? To make us, the paying punters, part with even more of our cash this season than ever before. Sure, inflation is a phenomenon in most countries the world over, and we all know that to have half a chance in football you need the funds to support a successful team. Indeed, many fans, providing they are a bit flush, don't mind stumping up a few bob to keep the evil-eyed wolf (relegation) from the door. We even realise that the players need a bit of pocket money from time to time to fund their (ahem) leisure activities (I was once told to buy shares in Victoria Wine, Ladbroke's and Ann Summers - make of that what you will), but now it would appear that Wycombe are basically taking the piss / large liberties / us for a ride (delete or leave in as you see fit). Going to watch Wycombe is now going to be considerably harder for the average paying customer.

To outline this point: we almost went down last season, yet this time around everything that can go up has done - from the lukewarm tea to a top whack season ticket. You get the feeling that if the club could prove it owned the air inside Adams Park, it would sting you for that too. Some examples are: Valley Terrace up £2 (28%) if you pay on match days, seats in the new stand up a minimum of £2 (12%-14%). The programme has risen 30p (20%) and if anything deteriorated in quality. To park your car in that field for a couple of hours is now 50% dearer, but of course there is a good half an hour's free usage after the game as you queue to get out! A deliberate ploy by the Club to get you to stay and spend some money in the bar? Now there's a thought. Even the damn fanzine has gone up, although I'm sure that an extra 20p every two months is acceptable to most of you [We hope (gulp!) - Ed].

There are various other increases too numerous to detail, especially the way that OAPs have been treated, but the icing on the cake has to be the ludicrous "£1 extra on match days". What prat dreamed this one up [Need you really ask? - Ed.]? If ever there were a disincentive to attract the casual fan, thinking of popping down for a game on the day, then this is it. I suppose they think we all live in town and have nothing better to do than pop in and buy tickets all the time? Or that we all have the WWFC credit card with vast credit limits to be able to afford the ticket prices? What happened to customer flexibility and fair treatment for all? Instead we get discrimination and arrogance from a financial department well out of touch with its customers.

So who are the 'grey men' that make all the money-making decisions at Adams Park? Apart from Lord Ivor himself, top of the pile (of cash?) and chief purse-string holder is that well known Dracula look-a-like Graham Peart, who it would seem views the average fan as a pure statistic and nothing short of an inconvenience if he/she dares to (a). miss a game, (b). speak his/her mind. Is Mr Peart trying to price us out of football altogether? I'm sure he's a very nice man, he just manages to hide it well. Next up is that old favourite, Commercial Manager Mark Austin, plus his cap-doffing sidekick and chief sweetie-tosser Tim Arnold (who said Laurel & Hardy at the back?). Mark has his nose shoved so far up a certain part of any sponsor's anatomy that he must find it difficult to breathe at times. A veritable joy to deal with, attentive and considerate, especially when you're about to thrust a fistful of tenners into his sweaty palms, otherwise he wouldn't give you the steam off his..., sorry..., wouldn't give you the time of day. It's your job, Mark, I know.

Got the hump? Too bloody right, nobody likes to be taken for a ride, but then we should be used to it by now. It won't stop us watching the Blues, a bit like putting petrol prices up doesn't stop us driving cars, but it does leave a sour taste in the mouth when your wallet is being continually knocked black and blue. It'll be interesting to see how these increases affect attendances should the unthinkable happen, and the team not do well. Right - I'm off to throw some darts at the pictures on my bedroom wall....

IN THE PUB WITH: ANDY KERR



Welcome readers to a new regular article where-upon various T.A.F. scribes invite Wycombe players of past and present down to a local for a jar and chin-wag. In these more relaxing surrounds we hope to free our ~~victim~~ subjects from the cliché ridden banter of the football club and through careful and calculated plying of beer get to know their *real* thoughts on what's happening in the wide Wanderers world. That's the plan anyway, plus we get an excellent excuse to get totally rat-arsed all in the name of work, a tough job but somebody's got to do it.

This series kicks off with a chance meeting I had with Andy Kerr, ex-Wanderers defence supremo, in The Ship pub in Marlow a few weeks back. Naturally I was a little apprehensive of approaching the big man, luckily a mutual friend introduced us and broke the ice. I soon realised that Andy Kerr is a very approachable geezer, as we recounted memorable Wycombe matches he'd taken part in I noticed a glint of pride and nostalgia in his eye. Last orders came around far too quickly for my liking but help was at hand. There was a private party on in the back bar which

Andy was attending and with a confident "He's with me mate" to the bouncer, a job which football stewards obviously aspire to, I was able to continue drinking and chatting.

We found a table and parked ourselves down. "So what've you been up to" I enquired, he told me that he was still working for Reading's local radio station commentating on Reading matches. Then after a long gulp of strong lager he lit up a cigarette and continued "The last couple of weeks I've been coaching the youngsters at Arsenal's school of excellence". The look of astonishment on my face nearly ruined everything until he realised that it was his boozing and smoking skills that took me aback, not the fact that he'd been coaching. "I don't normally do this" he hurriedly stated, "I keep myself in shape, work out every day, it's only at parties that I sometimes er..er..um..", "Do a Garner?" I prompted, "Yeah" he laughed, "you could say it like that. I don't know how Garner did it, you lads at T.A.F. summed him up perfectly when you called him the Keith Richards of the football world". Not surprisingly Andy had no kind words on the subject of Alan Smith and very cleverly avoided the subject, instead he praised John Gregory's rescue tactics of last season. "He seems to have the right idea and we should be there or thereabouts next season". Touched by the emphasis on the "we" I asked him how he now felt about the Blues, "Wycombe Wanderers is still very special to me. When you've spent so much of your life there, been through so many great things, you can't just forget it. I still feel very attached to Wycombe and hang out with the lads there a lot still".

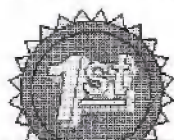


The bouncers started rounding everyone up towards the exit, the bar closed, I asked Andy what he'd like to do in future now that his professional playing career was practically at an end. "I'd love to come back to Wycombe Wanderers and do some coaching, coach the youngsters. Working at Arsenal's school showed me the importance of youth development schemes". Suddenly a rather attractive young lady came over and dragged Andy to his feet stating "we're going home". He didn't argue and I couldn't say I blamed him, we exchanged farewells then with a pint glass and fag in one hand and a babe on the other arm, he walked out looking like the cat who got the cream.

I couldn't help thinking that if his coaching skills are good enough for Arsenal surely they're good enough for Wycombe. With an evident passion for the club, a great personality and knowledge of the professional game I would implore Ivor and Gregory to consider him seriously for a job. A big cheers to Andy Kerr from T.A.F.

TAF's Alternative Stats Page

Worry not punters - this isn't the part in the fanzine where we start boring you silly like some programmes do, but we thought we'd introduce a couple of new features. This season we are hosting the "True Player of the Year" contest, along with the "Livewire League", the winner being the lad who gets the most cautions. This latter table should also give you an accurate guide as to when Steve Brown's suspensions are looming. As to our calculations of the first table, men of the match are democratically chosen by TAF contributors at each game, so whoever gets the majority vote wins. The thrill comes in the news that the winning player will receive a crate of Butlins lager (or an equivalent quality ale), while the winner of the "Livewire League" will get the tag of the "Hardest Man in Wycombe" and the chance of a fight with Geoff Capes. Here's how its gone so far.....



TAF MOM AWARDS



Hall of Fame

Steve Brown	2 MOM
Keith Scott	1 MOM

WIGAN: L2-5

KEITH SCOTT - For his aerial presence, double strike and willing to the cause when we were 4-0 down.

FULHAM: L1-2

STEVE BROWN - For his constant drive and verve down the left flank.

NORTHAMPTON: D 0-0

STEVE BROWN - For his no-nonsense antics and unbelievable energy on one of the hottest days of the year.



THE LIVEWIRES

<u>Name</u>	<u>Yellow</u>	<u>Red</u>
Steve Brown	2	0
Micky Simpson	2	0
Michael Forsyth	1	0

HAS PORTLAND BILL EVER PLAYED FOR PORTLAND UNITED?

In answer to the above, No I don't think so, but what the hell am I on about? Anyone who has had

asks our guest columnist NIGEL BUSBY as he goes delirious over Dorset

the great pleasure of visiting the island of Portland - once better known for its Borstal and Portland stone, and now for its prison ship and Portland stone - will know what I'm on about. Portland Bill is the lighthouse at the southern end of the island, and is also a rather dodgy puppet show made at the back end of the 70's before the excellent Fireman Sam (God, I am Wandering here).

The other thing that makes this place special is a visit to the once mighty Portland United. Well it did for me anyway. The club, nicknamed the blues by the locals, were the one time big boys of Dorset football and during July I made a re-visit to their new ground, it being 10 years since my last sojourn. Sadly this time, I never actually saw a game so I can't really call it a 'tick off' (sad!).

Grove Corner, as it was called, was situated in Grove Road and very easy to find as there is only one road onto the island. There is no train to the island so a car journey is required, or a bus or taxi from Weymouth station if you're desperate.

Back then the thing that surprised me was the size of the place for a Dorset combination side - a 300 odd seat raised stand, and cover for around 400 behind the nearside goal. Also, and rather unusually, there was another roof covering that seemed to be made out of Portland stone - no doubt from the quarry that surrounded the sloping ground.

Between 1950 and 1970/1 the club enjoyed membership of the Western League, and that legacy had left them with a really fine ground that once held 3,500 - a ground record for an FAC qualifying match with giantkillers Yeovil Town. Since then it has hosted Dorset Combination football. One interesting fact about the old ground was when it was being demolished, an unexploded wartime bomb was discovered under one of the penalty areas, and the whole island was evacuated as a safety measure!

Ten years on and a holiday week in Weymouth gave me the opportunity to look at the new ground, just a hundred yards up the road on a piece of reclaimed quarry land. The old site is now completely gone, sold to the local quarry firm, but I hoped the new ground would live up to the grandeur of Grove Corner.

As you drive into the car-park a modern clubhouse faces you, and some big letters P.U.F.C. stand out from the upper wall, giving it a very smart appearance. The stone is blue and white, and made from.... guess, Portland stone! Immediately behind the goal is a covered terrace with

concrete steps which were being laid as I was there - all very smart and compact. Down the side is a small stand that didn't seem to have any seats in it, opposite this is an original stone wall which makes the ground look as if it has been there for a number of years. Behind the other goal it is open with natural banking, and this gives the ground a real enclosed feel.

If you ever feel inclined, have a day off work, nip down on a weekday afternoon early in the season or later when the days are longer. Go round to the other side of the island and sit by the lighthouse in the fine Gibbs Mew pub. This is tranquility, just four houses stretching towards the sea with the last being a B&B. Forget the ugly MOD building on your right, a few pints of the wonderful Bishops Tipple while sitting on the balcony, dreaming of Keith Scot hatricks with the fresh breeze coming off a wonderful calm sea, will lift your spirits no end. Then drive back to the ground (**perhaps just a pint and a half then - ed**) for the evening match - the perfect hop! (getting sad again).

If you can bear any more of my wandering next time, who knows where I'll end up.

The Adams Family adds:

While on the subject of Dorset, regular readers will know of TAF's bonding with DM league gurus Dorchester Town. As we go to press, the Town have played just one game which they lost 3-0, placing them bottom of the league. With the loss of goal machine Pickard to Yeovil Town, Dorchester could struggle - but we'll keep you informed each issue.



The Half Decent Football Magazine

Available from newsagents or,
£21 per year (UK annual subscription) from WSC, 4th Floor, Pear Tree Court, London EC1R 0DS

CONTRACT REVIEW.

As performed by WWFC Hit-Man
Johnny Gregory.

With this being the inaugural edition of TAF for this season, we felt we had to pass comment on the players that have left and those who have joined since the end of last season. Certainly John Gregory is driving a hard bargain for would-be Wanderers with his tough approach in the transfer market. He has stated that he will only consider players that he believes will make it into the first team, which shows he is not going to fritter away the Adams Park funds on any old junk, like his predecessor was keen on doing. (Paul McCarthy excused). So here follows the low-down on this summers events:

GOING OUT... Gregory's summer clear-out was one of the largest and most controversial to be seen at the club for years. So out on his ear went **John Cheesewright** (23 appearances, 0 goals). He will be remembered by Blues' fans as the keeper who was a "poor mans" Brian Parkin. For whereas Brian does handle the odd cross in five, you could guarantee that Cheesy's flailing punch would cause more damage than not. Whatsmore, that safari suit that he was sporting on the last day of the season made him look like the illegitimate offspring of David Bellamy. On second thoughts, change that to legitimate. Also on his way out, but on a less solemn note was **Matt Crossley** (330 appearances, 10 goals). Well what more can be said about this loyal servant to the club, as it is well known that his defensive subtleties were the anchor for many a Wanderers win. And for a defender who rarely got into the opponents penalty area, his double strike in the FA Trophy semi-final at Sutton 1992-93 will be etched on Wycombe fans minds for many years to come. A true hero! Another star in recent years who departed has to be **Terry Evans** (156 appearances, 19 goals). One of O'Neill's most inspired signings, his influence at Wycombe was immense. Therefore it was a brave man who released him, even though throughout last season he hadn't looked the colossus he once was. He will undoubtedly be missed by many but in new skipper Paul McCarthy, I believe we have another winner who, while lacking the height, has the extra skill to deal with the more nimble-footed forwards. A firm good riddance goes out to **Dave Farrell** (73 appearances, 6 goals) who left on sour terms with the gaffer, telling him he didn't have the bottle to tell him his contract was up, face to face. This coming from a man who didn't have the bottle to challenge for the ball if the opposing player weighed over 11 stone. Depressingly inconsistent, and with an attitude to match, he's gone to join Desouza and Fry at Peterborough, where hopefully we can draw them in the FA Cup and give him some abuse. A true example of how to throw away

£100,000. One of the more disappointing exits was **Gary Patterson** (69 Appearances, 3 goals) who we at TAF had tipped for big things at Wycombe. His passing skills and combative play were there for all to see in the centre of the park, but whether it was a lack of consistency or concentration, he never seemed to be able to stamp his authority on the team, and ended up a bit-part member of the squad. Anyway having sponsored him for two years, we wish the lad all the best with Matt and Tel at Kingstonian. One of the least disappointing exits was ginger cringe **Terry Skiverton** (Appearances 21, goals 1) who was never a fan of the fanzine scene, which although not a crime, makes it a tad uncomfortable when he looks like he wants to take a swing at you. Still it will never come to blows now as the carrot haired one has disappeared into football oblivion. Shame.

Other lads to receive their marching orders were diminutive striker **Tony Clarke**, who never really set the gaff alight and **Graham Hall**, who would probably struggle to set Chesham United alight. Still they didn't get much of a chance in fairness, so good luck to whichever non-league outfit picks them up. And finally, let us not forget **Micky "the wad" Bell**, who you can read about elsewhere in this mag.

COMING IN...Gregory has been somewhat more frugal with his purse in the buying market. However with Steve McGavin and Jason Cousins surviving the summer turn-out to sign new contracts, the gaffer has clearly concentrated on quality rather than quantity. **Martin Taylor**, arrived on a free transfer from Derby, which should hopefully be a fruitful signing. On his loan spell last year he looked top quality, in a position that has been dodgy since the departure of Paul Hyde. Hopefully the thrashing at Wigan and the 50-yard lob against Fulham haven't dented his confidence. Also returning to Adams Park is one of the former greats at WWFC, **Keith Scott**. Having arrived via spells at Swindon, Stoke and Norwich, where he failed to hit the net regularly, we hope that Scotty can return to his old goal-scoring peak with Wycombe where he averages a goal every other game. At £50,000 he looks every bit a bargain.

So these are our two signings so far. However with the youth team throwing up potential stars such as the skilful Northern Ireland prospect Mo Harkin, and the original Spice Boy, Alan Beeton, we could be in for an entertaining season ahead. Also if Gregory can bring in the impressive looking Nicky Mohan from Bradford City, who is currently on loan, this could shore up a defence which is a bit short of man-power at present.

So all in all a quality, no-messing bit of summer work by Gregory. He's managed to bring in two classy players for a marginal initial outlay, and got rid of a lot of players, who were unlikely to trouble the first team this season. There is certainly pressure on this current squad to do a lot better than last season, and due to the good run that we've had under Gregory its inevitable that expectations are high. Lets be realistic then..... and head for the play-offs.

PUNTERS PAGE

A new feature of The Adams Family this season will be the chance for you, the punter, to have your say. Seeing as you are all too bone idle to put pen to paper we will make it easy for you by stopping someone at random and asking them a few questions. A bit like those annoying survey women in the town centre who always ask you to do a survey when you have your hands full of shopping bags and are running for a bus.

First punter up is:

NAME:

Richard Pryde

AGE:

28

WYCOMBE FAN SINCE:

The first game I went to was an FA Cup game at home to Reading in about 1977. I started going regularly in the mid Eighties.

YOUR PREDICTION FOR THE BLUES THIS SEASON:

We'll certainly finish in the top half but I cannot see us getting automatic promotion. Therefore, our best hope will be through the play-offs.

NEW KITS, GOOD, BAD OR UGLY:

Good. The quarters are traditional and look a lot better than last seasons outfit. Mind you, we have so many kits recently we are starting to become like Man. Utd.

ADAMS APPLE, WHAT WAS YOUR OPINION:

I didn't have a problem with them but no doubt if I had been sat near them it may have been different. I think it would have been better for the band to see what chants the crowd were singing and then join rather than suddenly playing 'When The Saints Go Marching In' when there was about to be a throw in.

BEST EVER WYCOMBE PLAYER:

Steve Guppy. Of the current team, Steve McGavin.

WORST EVER WYCOMBE PLAYER:

Simon Stapleton. I still wake up having nightmares about that last minute miss from one yard out against Rochdale a few years ago. He ran in with his arms aloft already celebrating and missed his kick. That definitely makes him the worst player ahead of such 'legends' as Jimmy Jacobs and Nigel Taylor.

WHAT DO THEY NOT STOCK IN THE CLUB SHOP THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE:

Do they still stock the Wanderers boxer shorts? If not they need to bring them back as my lucky boxers are getting a threadbare. Other than that they should sell 'The Art Of Managing' video by Alan Smith. That would sell out in no time.

WHAT HALF TIME ENTERTAINMENT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE:

At Crewe they get loads of school kids on the pitch at half time and play football on small pitches. I think we should try that.

IF YOU COULD RENAME 'THE CENTRE SPOT' WHAT WOULD YOU CALL IT:

'The Halfway Line House' or for the older generation 'The Bodger' as they seem to spend most of the match going on about what a great player he was in the Isthmian League days.

ONE THING YOU COULD CHANGE ABOUT THE CLUB:

The location of the ground. To be at the end of an industrial estate with only one road leading to it was rather stupid. If we ever get to the 1st Division or Premier League then the traffic chaos caused by the bigger crowds will be a real problem.

PARKIN OR TAYLOR:

Taylor. They are both good shot stoppers but the fact that Parkin is hopeless at crosses means Taylor is comfortably number one. Mind you, Taylor hasn't started too well this season.